



HOLIDAY FIRE SAFETY TIPS

Savannah Fire & Emergency Services understands that the best way to fight a fire is to prevent one. That's why we provide a full line of fire prevention services to the citizens of Savannah.

Each year, holiday fires claim the lives of over 400 people, injure 1,650 more, and cause over \$990 million in damage. By following some of the outlined precautionary tips, individuals can greatly reduce their chances of becoming a holiday fire casualty.

- Special fire safety precautions need to be taken when keeping a live tree in the house. A burning tree can rapidly fill a room with fire and deadly gases. Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needle should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch.
- Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.
- Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood-burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center.
- Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.
- Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires - they should not be warm to the touch.
- Ensure that all metallic or artificial trees are flame-retardant. All decorations should be nonflammable or flame-retardant and placed away from heat vents. Do Not Leave Holiday Lights on unattended.
- Never put wrapping paper in a fireplace - it can result in a very large fire, throwing off dangerous sparks and embers and may result in a chimney fire.
- Avoid using lit candles - If you do use them, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave the house with candles burning.
- Never place lit candles on a tree. Do not go near a Christmas tree with any open flame - candles, lighters or matches.

Finally, as in every season, have working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home, test them monthly and keep them clean and equipped with fresh batteries at all times. And remember to practice your home escape plan.